

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 03842 01 OF 02 011854Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 HA-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-05
INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02
USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 DODE-00 IO-13 H-01 AID-05
FDRE-00 EB-08 /115 W
-----077606 021909Z /46

R 011735Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 951
INFO USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 3842

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, XG, SREF
SUBJECT: INDOCHINA REFUGEE SITUATION

REF: (A) ROME 0040, (B) 77 STATE 307048

SUMMARY. MFA OFFICIAL HAS PROVIDED US WITH RESPONSE TO OUR JANUARY 3 DEMARCHE ON INDOCHINA REFUGEE SITUATION. WHILE LISTING DOMESTIC PROBLEMS WHICH IMPACT ON ITALIAN DECISION, THE OFFICIAL STATED THAT THE PRIMARY OBSTACLE TO A POSITIVE ITALIAN RESPONSE IS THE LACK OF OFFICIAL FUNDS TO ESTABLISH A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. SHOULD THIS PROBLEM BE RESOLVED, HE INDICATED ITALIAN WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A CERTAIN NUMBER OF INDOCHINA REFUGEES, ALTHOUGH HE INDICATED THAT THE ITALIANS WOULD BE UNWILLING TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO A PARTICULAR QUOTA. IN RESPONSE TO AN INTEREST IT EARLIER HAD EXPRESSED, THE VATICAN IS BEING INFORMED OF THE ITALIAN POSITION AND BEING ASKED TO ASSIST IN LOCATING AN ORGANIZATION WHICH MIGHT BE ABLE TO FUND A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. MEANWHILE, ITALIAN MERCHANT VESSELS ARE RECEIVING RENEWED INSTRUCTIONS TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEE BOATS IN DISTRESS. ACTION REQUESTED: IF DEEMED APPROPRIATE, DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO AUTHORIZE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 03842 01 OF 02 011854Z

THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VATICAN TO DISCUSS THE ITALIAN POSITION WITH THE VATICAN. END SUMMARY.

1. THE ACTING DIRECTOR (CERULI) OF MFA'S OFFICE OF FAR EASTERN AFFAIRS PROVIDED EMBOFF MARCH 1 WITH THE ITALIAN REPLY TO OUR DEMARCHE ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEE SITUATION (REFTEL A). CERULI STATED THAT THE ITALIAN RESPONSE HAD

BEEN DRAWN UP IN A JOINT MEETING ATTENDED BY OFFICIALS OF
THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR,
OF THE MINISTRY OF MERCHANT MARINE, AND OF THE MFA.

2. CERULI DREW ATTENTION TO PROBLEMS WHICH IMPACT ON
ITALY'S ABILITY TO CONSIDER TAKING A SIZABLE NUMBER OF
ASIAN REFUGEES. THESE PROBLEMS ARE: THE GENERAL UNHEALTHY
STATE OF THE ITALIAN ECONOMY; THE CURRENT UNEMPLOYMENT
SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY; THE NEED TO REPATRIATE AND ABSORB
INTO THE ECONOMY ITALIAN REFUGEES FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA;
THE PRESENCE IN THE COUNTRY OF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF
SOVIET JEWISH REFUGEES, WHO, WHILE ESSENTIALLY IN TRANSIT,
OFTEN REMAIN FOR EXTENDED PERIODS; AND THE CONTINUING
FLOW OF REFUGEES, SOME OF ITALIAN BACKGROUND, FROM CHILE AND
ARGENTINA.

3. CERULI THEN PROCEEDED TO DISCUSS WHAT HE TERMED TO BE
THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR INFLUENCING ITALIAN THINKING.
HE DESCRIBED THIS AS THE LACK OF ANY FUNDS TO PROVIDE FOR
THE RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES FROM ASIA. THIS ARISES
PRIMARILY AS A RESULT OF THE RESERVATION WHICH ITALY
ATTACHED WHEN IT ADHERED TO THE GENEVA CONVENTION ON
REFUGEES. THROUGH THE RESERVATION, ITALY INDICATED
WILLINGNESS TO ALLOCATE FUNDS ONLY RPT ONLY TO REFUGEES
FROM EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. (THE ONLY EXCEPTION TO THIS HAS
BEEN A LIMITED NUMBER OF CHILEAN REFUGEES WHO SOUGHT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 03842 01 OF 02 011854Z

ASYLUM IN THE ITALIAN EMBASSY IN SANTIAGO.)

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 03842 02 OF 02 021842Z

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EA-10 HA-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 PM-05

INR-10 L-03 ACDA-12 NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 SP-02

USIA-06 TRSE-00 NSC-05 IO-13 DODE-00 H-01 EB-08

FDRE-00 AID-05 /115 W

-----091193 021909Z /46

R 011735Z MAR 78

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 3842

4. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE LACK OF FUNDS APPEARED TO BE THE LARGEST IMPEDIMENT TO AN ITALIAN MOVE TO ACCEPT SOME INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, THE MFA REPRESENTATIVES ASKED WHETHER, IF SOME PRIVATE FUNDS COULD BE FOUND, A CONSENSUS COULD BE REACHED COMMITTING ITALY TO ACCEPT SOME REFUGEES WITHOUT ESTABLISHING A SPECIFIC QUOTA. THE INTERMINISTERIAL GROUP REACHED FAVORABLY TO THIS. FURTHERMORE, SINCE THE PAPAL NUNCIO TO ITALY HAD EARLIER APPROACHED THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT TO URGE IT TO ACCEPT SOME INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, IT WAS DECIDED TO SEND A REPLY TO HIM EXPRESSING READINESS TO ACT POSITIVELY AND SEEKING VATICAN ASSISTANCE IN LOCATING AN ORGANIZATION (PRESUMABLE CHURCH-SPONSORED) WHICH WOULD BE WILLING TO UNDERWRITE THE RESETTLEMENT COSTS. A LETTER TO THIS EFFECT IS BEING SENT TO THE PAPAL NUNCIO BY AN OFFICIAL OF THE MFA GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR EMIGRATION AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

5. REGARDING REFUGEE BOATS IN DISTRESS, THE INTER-MINISTERIAL GROUP AUTHORIZED THE MINISTRY OF MERCHANT MARINE TO SEND A NOTICE TO ALL ITALIAN MARITIME CARRIERS URGING THEM TO PROVIDE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE. TO A RESERVATION RAISED OVER PROBLEMS CREATED BY THE POSSIBLE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 03842 02 OF 02 021842Z

INABILITY OF ITALIAN SHIPS TO DISEMBARK BOAT REFUGEES AT PORTS IN ASIA, THE GROUP DECIDED THAT THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT WOULD SEEK TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS THAT COULD RESULT FROM SUCH A SITUATION IN A FAVORABLE MANNER. CERULI NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE ITALIANS DO NOT HAVE MANY SHIPS OPERATING IN ASIAN WATERS.

6. COMMENT. IN PROVIDING THE ITALIAN REPLY TO EMBOFF, CERULI SAID THAT THE RESULTS HAD BEEN MUCH MORE POSITIVE THAN HE HAD ANTICIPATED. WE WOULD CONCUR IN HIS ASSESSMENT. ESSENTIALLY, AN AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED TO ACCEPT A CERTAIN, UNSPECIFIED NUMBER OF REFUGEES PROVIDED THAT A METHOD OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL FUNDING FOR A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM CAN BE WORKED OUT. AT THIS JUNCTURE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO INSTRUCT THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT'S REPRESENTATIVE TO THE VATICAN TO APPROACH THE VATICAN TO ENCOURAGE IT TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THE ITALIAN POSITION. HOLMES

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME03842
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780096-0259
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803119/aaaadxu.tel
Line Count: 168
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6cb1d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ROME 40, 77 STATE 307048
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3152925
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INDOCHINA REFUGEE SITUATION
TAGS: SREF, XG, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6cb1d1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014